[Constitution as of July, 1947]

[641] [65] free medical service for working people, and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[671] Art. 134. Citizens of the Georgian SSR have the right to education.

This right is ensured by universal and compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for students of higher educational establishments who excel in their studies; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 135. Women in the Georgian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other public activity.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured by women being accorded an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance, and education, by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 136. Equality of rights of citizens of the Georgian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other activity is an inalienable law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 137. In order to ensure the citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Georgian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

Art. 138. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Georgian SSR are guaranteed by law:

a) freedom of speech;
b) freedom of press;
c) freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
d) freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

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EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

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As everywhere, education in the Caucasus aimed at developing those traits in the children which were part of the national cultural ideal. In the whole N. Caucasus and in Georgia, great stress was laid on the development of character (courage, stamina, loyalty, modesty, but also self-assertion and vengefullness) and on good manners (especially in the N. W. Caucasus there was a complex and rigid code of behavior). The education consisted further in instruction in the use of arms and in horsemanship. Among the mountaineers it had definite Spartan characteristics, e. g. the Khevsur put burning wicks or glowing coals on the hands of their children to harden them against pain and to test their stamina. Stress was also laid on the ability to express oneself well and to the point, and to make speeches at various occasions. In Georgia, among the higher classes, there was a native tradition of training in the arts and sciences, the centers of which originally were the monasteries. In the N. Caucasus such a tradition did not exist, though there were Moslem schools (medrese) giving instruction in religion and some arithmetic, and also Russian schools, founded after the subjugation. Before the revolution, the higher classes sent their children to Russian cultural centers to complete their education. Many chose a

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military career, as the qualities required there were most in conformity with the ideals handed down by native tradition.

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Among the higher classes in the N. W. Caucasus, the usage was to have their children brought up in a family of a lower class; this custom also existed among Western Georgian nobles in imitation of Circassian usage. Even before the birth of the child the aspirants vied with each other for the honor of being its atalyk (foster parent). The atalyk acquired all the rights of blood relationship; the ward upon completion of his education was naturally more attached to his foster parents than to his own, and could be counted on to avenge any harm done to his educators.

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planning without much assistance from labour drawn from the outside. Nevertheless racial intermixture in general and the immigration of Russians in particular increased even in Georgia under the Soviet régime. In 1926 there had been but 3·4 per cent Russians in the country against 8·9 per cent in 1939. On the other hand the percentage of Georgians dropped between the 1926 and 1939 census from 71·5 per cent to 61·4 per cent.

Russian cultural influence in Georgia is, however, much stronger than the percentage of Russians in Georgia's population indicates. In 1947 there were 300 Russian secondary schools in Georgia out of 800 altogether. Kupradze, the Minister of Education of the Georgian S.S.R., himself admitted that more than half of the pupils in Russian schools were non-Russians.[36]

It must be noted in this connection that the standard of education in Georgia is higher than in any other Soviet Republic, including the R.S.F.S.R. Thus in 1939 Georgia had, for every 1,000 inhabitants, 113·4 persons with secondary education and 12·2 persons with higher education. In the Russian Federation, on the eve of the Second World War only 76·8 per 1,000 had secondary education and only 6·5 per 1,000 had higher education. Georgia has also introduced eleven-year secondary education instead of the ten-year school existing everywhere else in the Soviet Union. This comparatively high educational level, combined with a good knowledge of Russian, has enabled the Georgians to play a not unimportant part in the Soviet civil service and in the bureaucratic machinery of the party.

GREATER GEORGIA

During the war the Georgians made a greater contribution to the defence of the U.S.S.R. than most non-Russian peoples. They played an outstanding part in preventing the Germans from penetrating into Transcaucasia. Fighting mostly in separate Georgian regiments and under Georgian officers they held up the German advance at the state borders of Georgia. It was thus a legitimate symbolical recognition of the Georgian war effort that a Georgian sergeant was allowed to hoist the flag of victory over the Berlin Reichstag together with a Russian Red Army man.[37]

The Soviet Government had every interest in advertising the war effort of the Georgians, for Moscow wanted to tell the world that here was a small people who had fought Hitler most heroically. This people must be rewarded at the expense of a neighbour state which had been neutral throughout the war. In other words, Georgia was to be switched into the diplomatic offensive which the Soviet Government launched against Turkey immediately after the end of the Second World War.